

Storing Dairy Products

All dairy products have a shelf life that varies according to how an item is processed, packaged and stored. Other factors, such as how long a product has been allowed to stand unrefrigerated on a counter or the type of container used can alter the freshness period.

Most milk, yogurt, sour cream and similar products are sold in date-coded cartons that indicate a product's peak freshness.

The shelf life of cheese depends on its type (hard or soft) and its form (cut or wax-coated). Cheese should be stored in its original packaging, with cut surfaces covered tightly by plastic wrap or foil.

The attached list offers general guidelines for handling dairy products safely.

Recommended Dairy Storage Guidelines

Product	Shelf Life	
	After Opening Temp/Time	Unopened Temp/Time
Milk	35° 1 week	35° 10-14 days
Cream	35° 1 week	35° 2 weeks
Whipping Cream	35° 1 week	35° 2 weeks
Half & Half	35° 1 week	35° 2 weeks
Butter	35° 2 weeks	35° 4 weeks
Natural Cheese	35° 1-3 weeks	35° 1-4 weeks
Processed Cheese	35° 5 weeks	35° 24 weeks
Cottage Cheese	35° 7-10 days	35° 18 days
Cream Cheese	35° 10-14 days	35° 3 months
Sour Cream	35° 1 week	35° 2 weeks
Yogurt (plain)	35° 3 weeks	35° 4 weeks
Ice Cream (in freezer)	0°/-5° 2 weeks	0°/-5° 4 weeks



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